

Site M:26/10/25

Old Baptist Cemetery

West Jefferson Street

Built: 1823

Public Access

In 1823 the Deacons of the Bethel Baptist Church constructed a Church with adjoining burying grounds at the western limits of the Town. This cemetery was used until the late 19th century when development of this West End necessitated widening of streets and the removal of some of the bodies. Twenty-eight marble and sandstone grave markers remain under the towering trees, but many are cracked and in poor condition. In 1973 the Montgomery County Historical Society deeded the land to Peerless Rockville Historic Preservation, Ltd., for preservation and maintenance of this site.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. M: 26/10/25

Magi No. 1650412308

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Old Baptist Cemetery

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Jefferson and Van Buren Streets not for publicationcity, town Rockville vicinity of congressional district 8state Maryland county Montgomery

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<u> </u> agriculture	<u> </u> museum
<u> </u> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<u> </u> unoccupied	<u> </u> commercial	<u> </u> park
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<u> </u> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u> </u> entertainment	<u> </u> religious
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u> in process	<u> </u> yes: restricted	<u> </u> government	<u> </u> scientific
	<u> </u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial	<u> </u> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<u> </u> no	<u> </u> military	<u> </u> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Peerless Rockville Historic Preservation, Ltd.street & number P.O. Box 4262 telephone no.: 762-0096city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Land Records liber 6247street & number Montgomery County Courthouse folio 332city, town Rockville state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title National Register - West Montgomery Ave. Historic District - 1974
Locally designated historic district - 1974date M-NCPPC - 1976 ☒ federal ☒ state ☒ county ☒ localpository for survey records City of Rockvillecity, town Rockville state Maryland 20850

7. Description

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Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The old Baptist Cemetery provides a quiet reminder of an earlier, slower era in Rockville, a contrast to the adjacent busy intersection. There are approximately 28 stones, many cracked and in poor repair, oriented to the east. Most are carved from marble or sandstone, and appear in a variety of sizes. Most are simple and round-headed in shape, but a few are more decorative.

The earliest remaining stone in the cemetery is dated 1839 (date of death). There is a wrought iron fence around the four graves in the Bouic plot. There are three large white oaks (150-175 years old) and black locusts of varying sizes on the property. Scrub hedgerows and concrete sidewalks delineate the cemetery's modern boundaries.

Attached is a catalog of stones which were visible when Peerless Rockville took title to the cemetery, compared with earlier listings. There are fewer stones now as a result of vandalism and of relocation of graves when Van Buren Street was constructed and Jefferson Street was widened and relocated. Old-timers recall brick sidewalks along Jefferson Street, and both iron and wood board fences around the cemetery.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1830–1900

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☒ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Old Baptist Cemetery is important as a reminder of the early Baptist Church in Rockville, and as the final resting place of several persons notable in Rockville's history. The Cemetery adjoins the lot where the original church stood, at the intersection of Jefferson and South Van Buren Streets.

On August 19, 1821, eight men and women declared themselves to be independent of the Old Seneca Baptist Church and began to form a new church in Rockville. On October 20 of that year, the Bethel Baptist Church was established, with Joseph H. Jones as its first pastor. Solomon Holland deeded land to Jesse Leach and William Chisewll, deacons of the Bethel Baptist Church, "forever in trust for said Church and to and for no other e, intent or purpose whatsoever". The 67½ square perches of land cost \$17.20. Note was taken of this land being at the western limits of the small town, "(except that if Jefferson Street in the Town of Rockville should ever hereafter be extended so much of said lot as will be taken off by the street shall be gratuitously (sic) given up for the use of said street)".¹ A church building was erected in 1823 to face Jefferson Street; the land adjacent to the church was to be utilized as the burying ground.

In 1863, "five sober and discreet persons, male members above 21 years of age" incorporated "The Baptist Church at Rockville, Maryland". The following year, the church building was rebuilt on the same site.

Several persons notable in Rockville's history were members of the Baptist Church, and are buried in the cemetery. Samuel Clark Veirs (1798–1872) operated Veirs Mill on Rock Creek; his wife Julianna (1797–1878) is also buried there; Samuel C. Veirs was postmaster of Rockville (1837–41) and later Chief Judge of the Orphans' Court. William Veirs Bouic, Jr. (1816–1896) Veirs' son-in-law, was an Attorney, judge, farmer, State's Sttorney, President of Rockville's Board of Commissioners (Mayor of Rockville), organizer of the Montgomery County Agricultural Society, trustee of the Rockville Academy, and a director in the C & O Canal Company;² he and his family are buried here.


The congregants maintained the Church to accommodate its growing population.³ Location of the Church and cemetery at the west end of town placed it in the midst of the town's expansion during the post-Metropolitan Branch "boom years" at the end of the 19th century. Henry Copp's 1890 real estate promotional brochure, "Peerless Rockville", showed a photograph of the Church and cemetery (attached) as one of the local places of worship. The titinel reported in 1897 that 16 bodies had been removed from the Baptist to the Rockville cemetery due to street improvements.

(continued)

Survey No. M: 26/10/25

10. Geographical Data

Quadrangle scale _____

H 

11. Form Prepared By

city or town Rockville state Maryland 20850

PS-2746

OLD BAPTIST CEMETERY

Catalogued By
 JTS - Scharf (1882)
 DAR - (circa 1955)
 NT - Noma Thompson (1949)
 JDM - Janet Manuel for
 MCHS (1979)
 PR - Eileen McGuckian for
 Peerless Rockv.(1983)

Dates of Birth/
 Death (age)

Name

Catalogued By

Comments

Austin, William Nelson	-1864 (72)	JTS-NT-DAR-JDM-PR	
Bogley, children of William A. & I.	Eugene 1876-1881 Ada B. 1872-1874 Clarence N.1881-1881	DAR-JDM-PR	Monument engraved on 3 sides; pin loose, top of monument off
Bohrer, Cornelia L.	-1874 (49)	JTS	
Bohrer, Wallace A.	-1864 (17)	JTS	
Bouic, Peter A.	-1859 (57)	JTS	
Bouic, William Veirs	1816-1896	JTS-DAR-JDM-PR	4 head & foot stones in lot with iron fence
Bouic, Mary A.M. Veirs	1821-1888	" " " "	
Bouic, Louis Aubrey	1871-72	" " " "	
Bouic, Mary R.	-1849 (4)	" " " "	
Braddock, William	-1859 (41)	JTS-DAR-JDM-NT-PR	Broken--may not be repairable
Braddock, Elizabeth	1854-1870 (16)	JDM-DAR-PR-NT	
Braddock, William Jr.	1850-1868 (18)	" " " "	
Braddock, Mary R.	-1864 (12)	" " " "	
Braddock, Isaiah	1848-1866	" " " "	
Braddock, John P.	-1864 (19)	" " " "	
Braddock, Roberta V.	1826-1866	" " " "	
Braddock, Annie	-1856 (3 mo.)	JDM-PR-NT	
Brewer, John	1804-1866	JTS	
Campbell, John I.	-1839 (21)	DAR-JDM-PR	Pretty shape and foot marker
Green, Rebecca	-1884 (59)	DAR-JDM-PR	Decorative but broken
Hance, William R.	-1878 (60)	JTS	
Haney, Eliza P.	1875-1875	DAR	JDM: Stone gone; EPH footstone lay- ing next to tree

NAME	DATES	CATALOGUED BY	COMMENTS
Horner, Elizabeth	-1875	NT	
Jones, Ellen Brewer	1845-1876	JTS	
"Little Bell Key"	1876-1878	NT-JDM-DAR-PR	Child's decoration (dove?)
Patterson, George C.	1815-1889 (73)	DAR-JDM-PR	Broken
Patterson, Dr. Thomas	-1848 (81)	DAR	(gone by '79)
Ricketts, Mary E.	-1882 (24)	JDM-DAR-PR	Decorative
Riley, Isaac	-1850 (76)	JTS	
Selby, Brice	-1811 (3 mo.)	DAR-JDM	
Selby, Brice	-1844 (70)	JTS-NT	
Smith, Charles	-1845 (28)	JTS-DAR-JDM-PR	Pretty stone and foot marker
Sommers, Edwin	-1870 (15 mo.)	JDM-DAR-PR	
Sommers, Virginia Sophia	-1872 (44)	JTS-DAR-JDM-PR	
Sommers, Willie W.	1863-1878	DAR-JDM-PR	
Sommers, Clarence	-1858	NT	DAR:dates unclear JDM:stone gone, pieces w/"Clar..." under tree
Spates, Charles	-1873 (83)	JTS-NT-DAR-JDM-PR	Stones off bases
Spates, Ruth	1788-1866	JTS-NT-JDM-PR	" " "
Stephen, Mary	-1850 (43)	JDM-PR	
Veirs, Samuel Clark	-1872 (75)	JTS-NT-DAR-JDM-PR	"Bradley" carved stone; leaning
Veirs, Julianna	1797-1878	JTS-NT-DAR-JDM-PR	<u>precariously</u>
Veirs, 2	"dates unclear"	NT	
Veirs, Clarence	(25 months)	DAR-JDM-PR	pointed arch head and foot
Vinson, Col. Thomas F.W.	-1843 (58)	JTS	
"Several slaves"		NT mentioned	

Other stones PR found (1983) : BS

small, no name

--S (broken)

large, heavy marble base and part of stone,
next to George C. Patterson

stones leaning on tree: MS

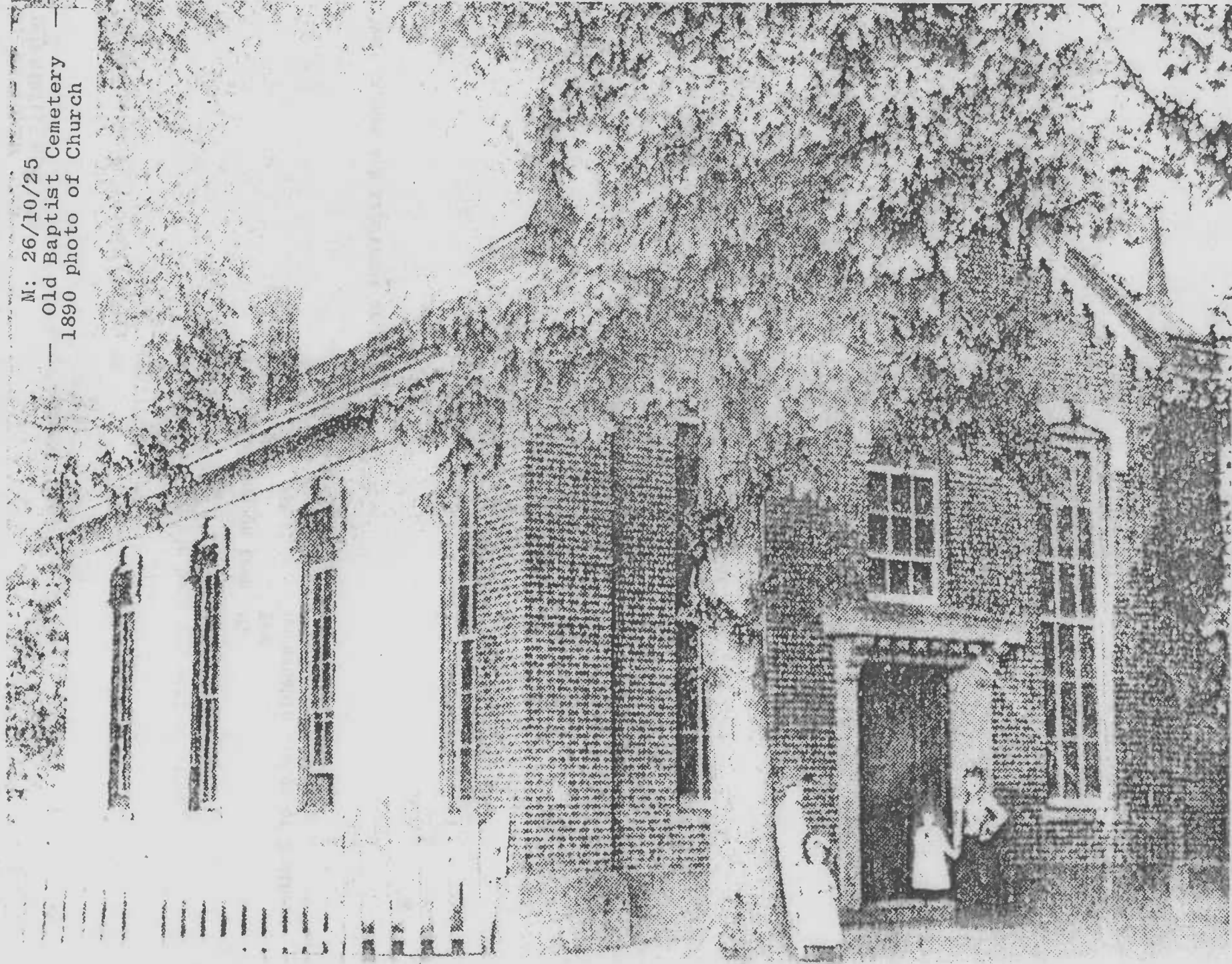
EPM

unreadable pieces of 2 others

"5913" slate square

Most stones are sandstone or marble

M: 26/10/25
— Old Baptist Cemetery
— 1890 photo of Church



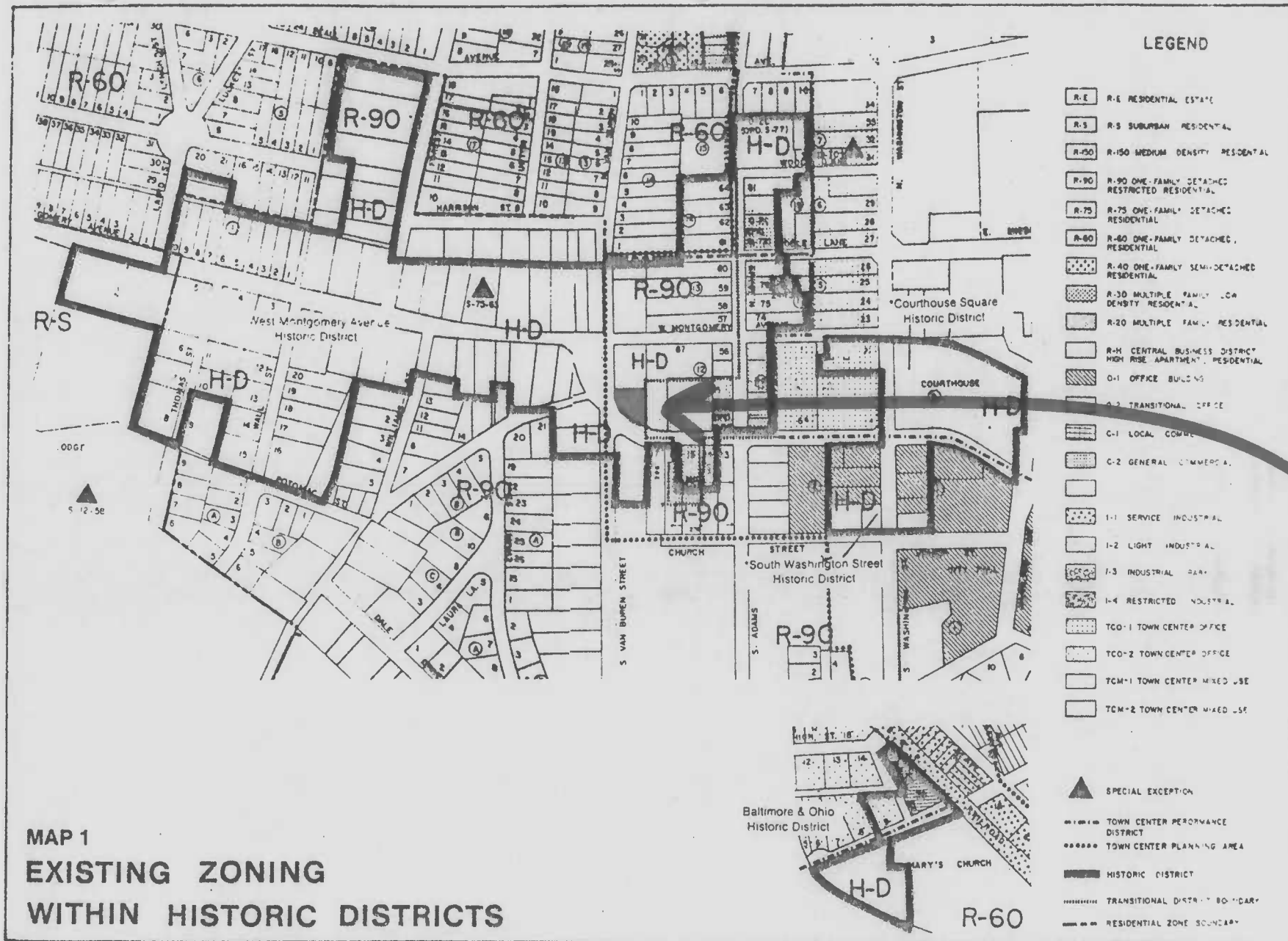
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - Old Baptist Cemetery, Rockville, MD (continued)

In 1908, the Baptists erected a new building at the corner of Jefferson and Washington Streets. It cost \$14,671 and was built largely through the contributions of Spencer C. Jones, son of the first pastor Joseph Jones. A parsonage was constructed next door in 1914. In 1913, the Sentinel reported that the "Old Baptist Church building in use for 90 years and abandoned six years ago to be razed. Material to be sold and proceeds used to beautify lot and cemetery. The old bell, cornerstone to be retained. Material will be used by Mr. Hewitt to build house on his lot on Bridge Street." In 1958, an educational building was added to the church; this section faced Jefferson Street.

The Baptist Church sold its property at Washington and Jefferson Streets in 1971, moving to a modern structure on Adclare Road. In 1973, the cemetery was deeded to the Montgomery County Historical Society for the purpose of its preservation and maintenance.⁴ In November, 1983, Peerless Rockville took title to the cemetery, and is now responsible for its maintenance.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Land Records of Montgomery County, X/163 (1823).
2. Portrait and Biographical Record of the Sixth Congressional District (Chapman, 1898), pages 158-161.
3. Baptist Church Records, 1824-1913. For example, under "Cost of Repairs to House of Worship and Cemetery Fence, done in May and June 1889", the costs of repairing the fence around the cemetery are broken down into dates, materials or service provided, payee, and cost. Total cost of repair was \$44.49.
4. Land Records, op. cit., 4464/271 (1973).





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M: 26/10/25

1001-7

Old Baptist Cemetery
LOOKING SOUTH EAST

AUGUST, 1984